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583 family is severe. We give the statement in detail in order
578 to show the general situation as he saw it. He is a townsman, and somewhat detached.

> The daughter on the farm has to wait till all the sons are got ready for their going off and maybe have been given their passage to America or money to set up in business or to settle on the land. But there are runaway matches all the time, they fall in love, they run off together, and they come in here and take work away from the laborers here. It takes a lot of love and courage because the son is usually cut off and the daughter leaves a very good place for nothing but a cabin and they get none of the money. Maybe after several years the girl will get her fortune, but not always. I remember Jerry N — whose father was very well off as farmers go, but he wouldn't marry the girl they picked for him and took up with a servant girl instead. He's driving a hackney now and lives in a cabin with a flock of children. Jimmy L — ran off but he gradually became reconciled with his people. The father had a good farm of sixty acres, and so had the girl, but the young fellow got nothing out of it. His father helps a little now, sending down a bag of potatoes.

602 Another case which the authors had under observation
593 from time to time illustrates not only the matchmaking
578 system but the general family setting in which marriage
627 takes place and farm life moves. Sanctions for conduct aggrieving the families are applied by the families themselves. The case is long but worth quoting in the words of the teller for its comprehensive character:

> There was a girl of the O'Rourkes from D —, they have a farm out there and she married a fellow named Murphy up in C —. She was a school teacher out in England for several years and she became great with this fellow the farmer, and she used to send him money over from England for when they would get married. She sent about two hundred pounds in all. She has an aunt up in C — married up there and it was all the fault of the aunt. She came home and she hadn't yet told her people anything about it. She was just about ready to get married to the fellow and she told them that she was going to get married. They agreed. Then she said she was going to get married to

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Murphy and they tried to argue her out of it, but she said it was too far gone now and she was committed to marry him, so they hastily gave her their blessing. He lived in a big house up by C— and had sixty acres.

Well, he was a sort of uncouth kind of chap, rough, and she was what you might say anglified, or citified. She wanted to brighten up the house and make it nice and hang up curtains and that sort of thing. He thought the reins of the horse would do for the curtains and so on, and it came to a fight between them, a clash of wills, and in the end, as it must, the stronger one won out; that is, the man's. She got hysterical and he cast round for ways of getting rid of her, and he sent up to Ennistymon for the doctor to come down and examine her to commit her to the asylum. He didn't send her up to C— though that was nearer and in his district, but he sent up for Dr. MacNulty to Ennistymon, leaving Dr. Starr in C— so as to get someone who wouldn't know the case.

The married sister of the wife was staying in the house at the time and he was driving her home. He told her the doctor was coming, and she said, "You are doing wrong," and made him turn round and go back to the house where Dr. MacNulty was examining the hysterical woman. Then the married sister got her brother and father to take her back to D—. They came up with Father Brendan of Ennis here and took her away down to D—. After a time they got up a party and invited him down for a reconciliation.

After a while she went back to live with him. He started it again and got her hysterical and called in another doctor, who said that there was nothing wrong with the woman.

One night the three brothers of the girl and her father came up to the house and one went round to the back door and the others went in the front and they caught the fellow. They were going to force him to sign receipts for the money the daughter gave him. Country people demand receipts for money they give and they are right, but the girl hadn't liked to ask and hadn't got any, so her people were going to step in and get them themselves. Murphy had rifled her belongings and torn off his name from all the receipts he had sent her to England. They came in and said that he was lucky he was going to escape with his life. No one in their family had ever been in the asylum and no one belonging to them had ever been insane or robbers.

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602 593 578 627 and that he was trying to black them with the disgrace of it. The girl ran in but they threw her out into the hall where her father caught her and held her. They said that all the people belonging to him were thieves, and that two of them, two uncles of his, his mother's brothers, were convicted for robbery and that all his people before him had been insane, and that he was trying to black the name of a good family. In the end they caught him and beat him till he consented to sign the receipts. They gave him a good hiding.

The teller drew his own conclusions from the case:

If the girl had listened to her parents, they would have told her all this and saved her. But she went on and married right ahead on her own advice. She probably thought she was doing well in marrying into sixty acres.

It is interesting that the application of sanctions does not confine itself to a single dereliction. In this case, according to the storyteller:

[461] Murphy was a terrible lazy farmer and wouldn't even till a patch of ground for a garden for himself or his stock, and the woman's people had to send up a load of potatoes for them. They told him when they beat him if he didn't turn into a farmer and do a man's work, till his garden, and provide, they would be up again and make him do it.

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buttons, and broken crockery. Patients sit in the "chair" to cure lumbago. It is believed that the water of this lake cannot be boiled and that no one can be drowned by it, and sixty or seventy years ago cattle were cured by it. The beasts were brought in herds to the lake to drink, and were driven into it. If they turned to the right hand they would recover, but not if they swam to the left. It is said that on one occasion a cow sank, but was found next day grazing in a field beside the lake, completely cured. In consequence of drainage works, the water level has fallen, and the mud round the shore is too deep to allow the cattle to be driven through it, so on May Day every year, before sunrise, a little crowd gathers, of perhaps over 100 persons, to fill bottles with the water for curing cattle, especially of "the worm." The water keeps good till the next anniversary, and is also used to give a "good churning" and to clear a "garden" of caterpillars.[22]

In 1839 Lough Iona (now Eenagh) was reputed to cure sick cattle on Mondays and Thursdays.[23] In 1808 the smiths were in some districts employed to kill the cattle,—or rather to fell them for slaying,—and their perquisites were the animals' heads.[24]

Persons over sixty years of age are often firm believers in the charming away, or "taking," of milk and butter. The younger folk usually deny that they hold this belief, and, where they take part in quarrels caused by it, avowedly only do so to support their elders. Two families living in the south-east corner of the county had about 1890 a quarrel resulting in a serious feud, hardly as yet appeased. It seems that for about three years the cows of the first household gave but little milk, and that little so bad and unwholesome for pigs and calves that several died. Ordinary veterinary practitioners, and even the local "knowing men," did no good, so the farmer sought a "wise man" of renown in another parish. This sage directed his client to watch the local well all May Eve, and to let no one come near it till after midnight. The farmer and his sons hid near it, saw a man and a woman of the

[22] *The Journal of the Limerick Field Club*, vol. ii.

[23] *Ordnance Survey Letters*, (Co. Clare), vol. i., p. 161.

[24] Hely Dutton, *Statistical Survey of the County of Clare*, p. 359. The smith was a magician amongst the Irish, and the ancient *St. Patrick's Lorica* prays against the spells of "smiths, women, and druids."

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suspected family coming to the well, and sprang out and bade the newcomers keep away. The parties quarrelled, and were reinforced, as the news spread, by all the women, children, dogs, and sympathisers of both families. At last guns and hay-forks were brought, and blood was on the point of being shed, when some one found that midnight had passed, and the contestants at once went home. The cattle gave good milk all that year, and the well was watched on succeeding May Eves with equally good results. The bitterness is said to have died out round the well some years ago, but is still apparent between the households in other matters.[25]

A charm to cure "slow churning" has already been described.[26] In 1892 a horrible case of stirring milk with a dried human hand in order to "bring butter" was reported from the Kilkee district, but I could never learn the details. A similar practice somewhat earlier, near Oola on the borders of Limerick and Tipperary, was brought to light after the death of a farmer by a quarrel, ending at the sessions, between his three sons for the possession of the ghastly object.

The method of "taking butter" practised near Craigbrien, to the south of Ennis, was to take a hair from the tail of each of the victim's cows on May morning, twist the hairs together, and dip them in the milk.[27] I heard of a protective knotting of seven hairs in each cow's tail near Edenvale in the same district, and of a magic dashing of water over the churn when the butter was slow to come,—an excellent natural aid in hot weather. The greasy substance called "May butter," lying on the grass with the dew, was used for milk charms near Clonlara. I heard of it more definitely at Kenry, County Limerick, where a woman gathered it in her apron, and a hare was seen rolling and rubbing itself in the "May butter"; the hare, when pursued, turned into a local witch. If you come into a house where churning is in progress, you should always "put your hand to the churn," *i.e.* give a few strokes

[25] So told to me by the late Hugh Massy Westropp, who, as nearest magistrate, had to intervene to keep the peace on more than one occasion, and was called up to the well on one May Eve.

[26] Vol. xxi., pp. 195-6, as told by the late Miss W. Westropp of Fortanne.

[27] So late Mrs. Stacpoole of Edenvale.

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